



Christmas Good News

Late on a sleepy, star-spangled night, those angels peeled back the sky just like you would tear open a sparkling Christmas present. Then, with light and joy pouring out of Heaven like water through a broken dam, they began to shout and sing the message that baby Jesus had been born. The world had a Savior! The angels called it “Good News,” and it was.

*Larry Libby
Christmas Stories for the Heart*

Marston’s Minute and Minuteman Award

This year began with our trip to Washington, D. C. for the 200th Anniversary Celebration of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday in February, with the Sovereign Military Order of the Loyal Legion. This group honors our Union officer ancestors. Our trip to Atlanta in July was especially memorable, as I was one of six compatriots of the Sons of the American Revolution who received the Minuteman Award (the maximum awarded out of 27,000 members), its highest honor for long and faithful service to the National Society. My trip to Boston in August/September (3 weeks) gave me the opportunity to enjoy the condominium in Andover of our friend, **Patricia Morse**, a DAR regent in Menlo Park. I became a “regular” of the Commuter Rail, where I met two of my distant cousins.



Our travels continued with a trip to Paris in October (3 days), followed by five days in Lisbon, for the international meeting of the Knights Templars. My appointment as Deputy Editor General was confirmed there. We had only three days at home before we embarked on our eight-day Caribbean Cruise to Nassau, St. Thomas, Puerto Rico and the Grand Turks



in November. We continued our travels in West Rotunda, Florida with our friends, **Bob and Sheila Disney**, who are fellow members of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (SMOTJ). We continued on to Boston for the SMOTJ Convent in Worcester, which I had the pleasure of leading as Prior I of the Priory of St. David of Wales in New England on November 14 (my birthday).

Kathy and I spent two nights (Nov. 13 & 14) at an 1812 home in Bolton, which was once owned by my parents from 1942-1946. The present owners, **Lyn and Paul Slade**, have turned it into a bed and breakfast guest home (called Charlotte’s House) with three bedrooms. Kathy and I slept in my parents’ old bedroom, while our SMOTJ friend, **Clark B. Loth**, stayed in my former bedroom. Another SMOTJ couple, Rev. **David and Stephanie Hockensmith**, slept in the newer third bedroom. Paul’s parents, **Paul and Charlotte Slade**, purchased the home in 1946 from my parents and did extensive remodeling. My experience there was quite nostalgic.

Kathy’s Kaleidoscope

So many activities, so much fun volunteering and with so little time to spare-a real kaleidoscope kept Kathy occupied in 2009. Let’s start at the end and work backward.

Wreaths Across America-December 12, 2009

Over 1800 people attended the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery ceremony which culminated an annual project involving many volunteers from 4H, Civil Air Patrol, DAR, Patriot Guard, Missing in America, Cemetery Support Committee, and Friends of the Cemetery. Donations supplied 5,570 wreaths for the cemetery-one for every headstone. Rain did not deter placement of the wreaths to remember and honor the memory of all fallen heroes who served and sacrificed their lives for our freedoms.



California Genealogical Society

Talent, time and energy were devoted to many library projects which included improving the website, installing replacement computers, and managing the technology of the CGS library located in downtown Oakland.

Daughters of the American Revolution

This was my second year (of a two-year term) as the 1st

Vice Regent for the Anne Loucks Chapter. Conducting new member orientations, organizing chapter programs and maintaining the chapter website engaged my time locally. Little did I know that Geocities elimination of free websites would mean my help was needed by ten DAR chapters. **St. David of Wales in New England (and SMOTJ)**

A lingering project for our Priory was the creation of their website. In late November, it was launched to great cheers from the Prior (Marston). We will see it used much in the coming years to educate and inform members. Of course, the same holds true for the Priory of St. Matthew (Texas) as theirs is in the works. Grand Priory communication absorbed both of us with continued publication of the *Beauséant* and *Templar Times*. **Kathy's Card Creations**



Just let me close with my most creative endeavor that continues to delight family and friends. Nothing warms my heart more than to create that one-of-a-kind-card for all special occasions including a "hooray for you" card for granddaughter Sophia.

Family Update

Michael Amador

Michael (15) towers at 6'1" and is enjoying his sophomore year at De LaSalle High School (famous for 151 consecutive football wins and two national titles). He enjoys track and swimming. This year he became a Life Scout and plans to become an Eagle Scout in 2010.



Sophia Amador

Sophia (12) is quite the thespian, having successfully played Amy in Little Women, which required twenty pages of memorized lines. She is now the top contender for her own cooking show for children on PBS. It would be called "Sophia's Kitchen," with cooking demonstrations from a home-grown garden. Her busy schedule, if she is chosen, will not hamper her dedication to her clarinet lessons.



Sophia, Halloween 2009

Haley Watson

Haley (9) is an accomplished synchronized swimmer (the future Esther Williams?). She garnered six gold medals, along with two other girls, in all of the area swim clubs. One girl had seven gold medals and another had eight, which is what Haley has her sights on for the 2010 season. She has dreams for the 2020 Olympic team and hopes for a full scholarship in synchronized



swimming at Stanford University. **Alexia Watson**

Lexie (7) was on the swim team (not synchronized) and the gymnastics team. She is very much into pets, and is hoping for another puppy and hamster this Christmas. She is doing quite well in the second grade. As the youngest of our grandchildren, she seems to be the most sociable of them all, loving to give grandpa the biggest hugs she can.

Alexander Maniaci



Xander (9), has chosen to excel as a gymnast. Each week we hear about a new flip, tuck, or roll that he has mastered. Besides a deep knowledge about all the Pokemon characters, he enjoys reading books and listening to them on his iPod. In third grade, he received his best report card ever and enjoys driving his own go-cart.

Random 2009 Highlights

- Kathy met Presidential candidate **Fred Dalton Thompson** and former professional football player and sportscaster **Lynn Swann** at BowlExpo, the premier bowling industry trade show.

- Lynchburg, Tennessee is home to Jack Daniels distillery. Lynchburg is also the seat of Moore County, the smallest county in Tennessee. Even though it is home to the distillery, it's a dry county and has been ever since prohibition. **Betty and Larry McClanahan** showed us the sites, including Lynchburg.

- Aunt **Carol Theune** and her family hosted us at a family dinner in Bowdon Georgia. It was really great to sit down and reminisce with Carol and have the opportunity to get to know first cousins better.

- One of the tours offered in Nassau was to learn to ride a Segway PT. Kathy and friend (for life) **Linda Upper** signed up and thoroughly enjoyed learning to ride.



First cousin Linda Durham, her daughter Anna Durham and Aunt Carol Theune

